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Obama's Classroom Campaign: No Junior Lobbyist Left Behind

Michelle Malkin

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"ABC" stands for All Barack's Children. On Sept. 8, young students across the country will be watching television. Yes, they'll be parked in front of boob tubes and computer screens watching President Obama's address on education.

Instead of practicing cursive, reviewing multiplication tables, diagramming sentences or learning something concrete, America's kids will be lectured about the importance of learning. And then the schoolchildren, from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, will be exhorted to Do Something -- other than sit in their seats and receive academic instruction, that is.

Education Secretary Arne Duncan dispatched letters to principals nationwide, boasting, "This is the first time an American president has spoken directly to the nation's schoolchildren about persisting and succeeding in school." But the goal is not merely morale boosting. According to White House event-related guides developed by the U.S. Department of Education's Teaching Fellows, grade-school students will be told to "listen to the speech" and "think about the following":

- What is the president trying to tell me?
- What is the president asking me to do?
- What new ideas and actions is the president challenging me to think about?

Students can record important parts of the speech where the president is asking them to do something. Students might think about: What specific job is he asking me to do? Is he asking anything of anyone else? Teachers? Principals? Parents? The American people?

After the speech, teachers will ask students:

- What do you think the president wants us to do?
- Does the speech make you want to do anything?
- Are we able to do what President Obama is asking of us?

Obama's White House Teaching Fellows include Chicago high-school educator Xian Barrett, a fierce opponent of charter schools who founded a "Social Justice Club" and bussed students to protests, and Michelle Bissonette, a Los Altos, Calif., teacher who is "focused on developing my leadership as a more culturally and racially conscious educator."

The activist tradition of government schools using students as junior lobbyists cannot be ignored. Zealous teachers unions have enlisted captive schoolchildren as letter-writers in their campaigns for higher education spending. Out-of-control activists have enlisted their secondary-school charges in pro-illegal immigration protests, gay marriage ceremonies, environmental propaganda stunts and anti-war events.

And last year's presidential campaign saw disgraceful abuses of power by pro-Obama instructors. In New Rochelle, N.Y., elementary students were given an in-class assignment to color in drawings of Obama -- including a picture of a campaign button featuring his face and the slogan "Students for Obama 2008." In

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Cumberland County, N.C., a fifth-grade teacher turned a "civics" discussion into an unhinged harangue against a girl who said her family supported John McCain.

Nor can the Democrats' strategy of using kiddie human shields to advance their legislative agenda be overlooked in the context and timing of Obama's speech. Children have been front and center of the left's push for an ever-increasing government role in health care -- from Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid's use of Baltimore seventh-grader Graeme Frost to push for the massive S-CHIP entitlement expansion to Obama's none-too-coincidental choice of Massachusetts 11-year-old town hall questioner Julia Hall (the daughter of a prominent Obama activist and organizer who assailed Obamacare critics' "mean" signs) to the Kennedy family's decision to put grandson Max Allen on center stage to pray for health care reform at his uncle's funeral last week.

So when the Department of Education directs schools to gather children 'round the TV monitors for Obama's pep talk and then have them do this...

-- Create posters of their goals. Posters could be formatted in quadrants or puzzle pieces or trails marked with the labels: personal, academic, community, country. Each area could be labeled with three steps for achieving goals in those areas. It might make sense to focus on personal and academic so community and country goals come more readily.

-- Write letters to themselves about what they can do to help the president. These would be collected and redistributed at an appropriate later date by the teacher to make students accountable to their goals.

...parents have every right to worry about their children being used as Political Guinea Pigs for Change.

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